



PUBLIC HEALTH
IN
SOUTH EAST ESSEX
1973

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE
URBAN DISTRICTS OF CANVEY ISLAND, BENFLEET AND
RAYLEIGH, AND THE RURAL DISTRICT OF ROCHFORD.



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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1973

Telephone;
RAYLEIGH 6101

Public Health Department,
134 High Street,
Rayleigh, Essex
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To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District
Councils of Canvey Island, Benfleet and Rayleigh and
the Rural District of Rochford

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1973 was the last calendar year of existence of the four Districts and this will, therefore, be my last Annual Report. It was a relatively healthy year, the main disturbances being a measles epidemic and a moderate outbreak of influenza towards the end of the year. To say that the health of the four communities has been relatively good is not to say that there is no room for improvement. If the hazards of life continue as at present, 6 out of every 30 children who leave school will die before they reach the age of 65, more than this will suffer illness on the way; the Office of Population Census and Surveys, Social Survey Division (General Household Survey 1973), estimates that at any one time one person in five is sick or disabled. This sickness and disablement is by no means confined to elderly people, though just over half of them seem to be suffering limiting long standing illness or restricted activity. In a two-week period, 10% of children (14 and under) were found to be sick or disabled, 15% of adults under middle age (15 - 44) were similarly incapacitated and so were 28% of the middle aged (45 - 64). Much, therefore, remains still to be done in reducing disability from sickness, and it still remains true that if we improve the community's health, we will increase its wealth.

We are reducing the damage done by the intestinal infectious diseases, but the diseases of the lung and respiratory tract, of the heart and circulation, and of the bones and joints could and should be considerably reduced. These will be tasks that the new Local Authorities and the new National Health Service working together will have to labour at for many years to come.

A number of the indicators of health in South-East Essex are satisfactory. The crude death rate and the crude infant mortality rate are both low at 9.8 per thousand, and 9.8 per thousand live and still births respectively. The birth rate is just under 17 per thousand.

Your Councils have continued to give what assistance they could to those hampered in life, and the following action has been taken prior to and also to comply with the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970.

CANVEY ISLAND U.D.

In 1961 a bungalow property then under construction was modified so as to enable a housewife confined to a wheel chair to move about inside and outside the dwelling by ramping the front door, widening and fitting sliding doors internally with front door swinging both ways, modifying the kitchen with lower worktops and knee space under and re-arranging the toilet with space alongside and suitable hand grips and lifting apparatus. As a result of this successful conversion a further conversion during construction was carried out in 1963 by modifying a two storey dwelling with downstairs bedroom, shower and toilet en-suit for a young housewife

with four children. With sliding and wider doors downstairs, split level cooker, kneeholes and lowered worktop heights together with double swinging front door and ramp this young housewife was enabled to live a fuller family life.

Up to December 1972 all housing for aged persons has incorporated specific requirements designed to help the aged such as ramped accesses, handles to bath and toilet, rails both sides of corridors, waist height power points and lower level light switches. Four Warden supervised grouped accommodation units have been built. These have included seven ground floor flats and two bungalows each tailored to the specific disability of the tenant with possibility of future changes according to circumstances.

In the design stage two further family bungalows were designed round specific tenants for occupation in 1973, and a further modified flat for occupation early in 1974. At present under construction is a further aged persons grouped accommodation unit with warden, which incorporates two ground floor flats designed specifically for physically handicapped persons which will be available late in 1974. Preliminary designs are in hand for a further and improved aged persons grouped accommodation with a further two or three physically handicapped persons flats incorporated which should be available in 1975. All aged persons and physically handicapped accommodation, whether Warden controlled or not, have a bell warning system incorporated in the design. Small groups have a nominated person amongst them for emergency calls to be made and thus ensuring that there is always someone on hand in this event.

Several minor modifications to existing dwellings have been made to make life easier for certain tenants having slight disablements not requiring major structural alterations.

Two Public Conveniences have had toilet compartments widened, grip handles installed and seats adjusted in level and similar facilities were designed into "The Paddocks" Community Centre opened in October 1973.

The new Sports Centre designed in 1972 and now under construction incorporates special provision for the physically handicapped including wide and specially equipped toilets and a lift to first floor enabling physically handicapped persons to participate in all the facilities and use the viewing galleries.

To enable those having motorised invalid carriages a special free car park with ramped access was built on a level with the top of the sea-wall at Thorney Bay so that a physically handicapped motorist could sit in his vehicle and enjoy an unobstructed view over the river and on to the activity along the beach and on the water.

Special provision has been made to allow motorised vehicles driven by or carrying the disabled to park in "No Waiting" areas for shopping.

Public Offices have been provided with ramped entrances including the main Post Office and the Council Offices.

The Public Conveniences at present in the design stages, for the new Town Centre, will have special toilets for the physically handicapped incorporated.

BENFLEET U.D.

One purpose built 'sheltered' unit erected in 1964 providing 32 units of accommodation for the elderly with Warden and Communal facilities.

Two newly built bungalows have been specially designed for disabled persons at The Rundells, Thundersley.

All public buildings under the control of the Council have been provided with access ramps and facilities for the disabled have been included in the new toilets at Runnymede Swimming Pool.

Special sessions for the disabled have been arranged at Runnymede Swimming Pool.

RAYLEIGH U.D.

Two purpose built 'sheltered' units erected in 1965 and 1970 providing in all 76 units of accommodation for the elderly with Warden and Communal facilities.

A further 30 purpose built bungalows and flats for the elderly without Communal facilities.

Convenient access to public buildings in the control of the Council has been arranged for disabled persons.

ROCHFORD R.D.

Three purpose built 'sheltered' units erected in 1964, 1970 and 1972 providing in all 71 units of accommodation for the elderly with Warden and Communal facilities. A further such special unit is now in course of erection.

Two public toilets have been constructed for the disabled.

In the Canvey section of the report, I have included extracts from the last report of the Chief Public Health Inspector to the Public Health Committee, which gives a very useful birdseye view of the environmental health of Canvey Island over the years.

Apart from the measles and influenza already referred to, there was a small outbreak of infantile diarrhoea due to salmonella infection which affected both Southend and South-East Essex. As far as can be determined, the sequence appears to have been that on the 2nd June a mother from Southend-on-Sea was delivered of a child in the Maternity Unit at the Rochford General Hospital. Within 48 hours, both mother and baby were discovered to have diarrhoea and laboratory examination of stool specimens showed salmonella barielly to be present. The ward concerned was closed and 14 mothers and babies were discharged to addresses in South-East Essex. Three of these mothers and babies were found to be infected with salmonella barielly. The number of cases of diarrhoea reported was 40. The mothers and babies discharged had necessarily to be dealt with by Essex County Council domiciliary midwives, but laboratory monitoring of the staff concerned showed that none of them contracted the infection. The Maternity Unit was able to operate under normal conditions from the end of June onwards.

The other incident of note concerned a young man on leave from Zambia, who proceeded homeward via Kenya, Israel and Cyprus, and developed fever and indigestion on the way. He left Zambia on the 18th August, arrived in Tel Aviv on the 19th, in Nicosia, Cyprus on the 22nd, and landed at Heathrow on the 28th. His illness appeared to begin on the 'plane journey from Cyprus to London. After the journey he felt somewhat better, but began to feel ill on the evening of Wednesday, 29th August, and began to suffer considerable diarrhoea. He was seen and treated by his family doctor and was removed to the Isolation Unit of Rochford Hospital on the 1st September, with high fever, headache and sore throat and a rash on the palm of the hands. I was called in to see him by the Infectious Disease Physician on the evening of the 1st; seen again on the morning of September 2nd: he had flushed face, bloodshot eyes and the body was covered by a morbilliform rash, breathing was relatively fast and he had a loose cough, but the diarrhoea had lessened. In these circumstances, one could not totally exclude the possibility of smallpox and I took skin specimens which were despatched the following day to the Virus Reference Laboratory at Colindale, and called in the Smallpox Consultant. After the Smallpox Consultant had made his examination, the patient was removed on the night of September 2nd to the appropriate smallpox hospital, i.e., Longreach Hospital, Dartford. The Isolation Unit was quarantined and all staff who had the possibility of contact with the patient were vaccinated. I, personally, vaccinated the patient's wife, and his father and mother, the next day, but on the afternoon of September 3rd I was informed by the Colindale Public Health Laboratory that smallpox virus had not been detected on electron microscopy.

At the Longreach Hospital, the clinical course of the disease subsequently became consistent with measles and examination of serum samples showed an increase in measles antibody between the 3rd and 11th September. The patient was, therefore, able to return to Zambia after a rather eventful leave.

STATISTICS

The only official statistics that have been received from the Registrar General relate to population as at 30th June, 1973. These are as follows:-

CANVEY ISLAND	29,550	RAYLEIGH	26,740
BENFLEET	49,180	ROCHFORD	42,460

Figures of live births for the area of the four Districts totalled 2,403 for the year.

Deaths occurring in South East Essex during 1973 are more fully reported and the following are the figures compiled locally:-

	Number	Rate per 1,000 population
CANVEY ISLAND U.D.	238	8.1
BENFLEET U.D.	434	8.8
RAYLEIGH U.D.	241	9.0
ROCHFORD R.D.	502	11.8

CANVEY ISLAND URBAN DISTRICT

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS by

A.P. John Cook, F.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., M.R.I.P.H.H.,
CERT . S.I.B.

"Pre-War Period 1930-1939:

Public works were obviously limited by resources, but roads were beginning to be built and the major promenade development in 1937 of Eastern Esplanade, Western Esplanade and Thorney Bay Road was a major factor, not only in traffic movement, but to open up the resources of seasonal trade and foreshore development. The housing standard of timber-framed bungalows presented many problems of maintenance, especially in the pre-war era, when a majority were purely for seasonal use. As the population grew and these were brought into permanent use higher standards of maintenance were achieved, mostly by informal action as was apparent to all at the start of the post war era when 'building in brick' started the higher standards of which we are now familiar. Drainage was a great problem; lack of foul sewers meant most dwellings relied on pail closets of one sort or another, even the chemical closet gave its problems of on-site disposal. Only a minority of the total dwellings and shops for that matter had water closets connected to cesspools and these became a public health nuisance unless regularly attended to and emptied. Pollution of surface water drains, i.e., ditches and dykes was a common hazard and took up much time to control.

Pest control was difficult owing to the lack of remedial 'weapons' at our disposal. Paraffin spraying of dykes against mosquitoes and other flying insects was the order of the day; and was the only weapon we could employ against the 'caterpillar' menace of our arch enemy the Brown Tail Moth and the later identified Lackey Moth.

With the advent of the Main Sewer drainage connections to the shops were made to the relief of all, not least being the Public Health Department. Refuse collection was non-existent until a horse and cart was employed under contract with the driver employed as the collector from large communal bins placed at the ends of roads, in some instances, one bin serving two adjacent roads.

Residents, in particular, having acquired the habit of crushing all their disposal tins and using them in sumps, often with a filtering media such as clinker for their waste water disposal, failed to use these bins for some long time, burying all waste in gardens, in most instances gardens being large and soil bacteria soon disposed of waste organic material. As the population grew these communal bins were used more, the 'newcomers' not being used to 'self-help' techniques. This form of collection continued into the post war era.

The refuse disposal site was lowland north of the lake owned by Mr. Chambers, rudimentary covering did take place, but the 'rules' were far less stringent than today and the Planning Acts had yet to come along. I spent many a happy hour Saturday afternoons with an air rifle shooting rats.

Camp sites were scattered all over the place comprising mostly one, two or three tents; this situation was hard to control during the season, not having the benefit of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act. Caravans, pantechnicons and the like, mostly for seasonal use were stationed on land all over the district, sometimes in conjunction with large sheds, fancifully called chalets, or with bungalows and 'let-out' to pay the rates and make a little seasonal profit.

Infectious disease meant in the main removal of the patient to hospital; scarlet fever and diphtheria being somewhat dread words those days. A specially equipped infectious diseases ambulance with soiled linen compartment and suitably attired driver was stationed at the old Sutton Ford Isolation Hospital, near Rochford and collected the patients; often as not I was the member of the Public Health Staff who boarded the ambulance at the Council Offices and accompanied it to the patient's address, saw the patient aboard with all 'infected' linen for steam fumigation at the hospital and arranged the fumigation and or disinfection of the premises. It was quite a procedure.

Direct domestic water supplies from the main were in the minority; many standpipes were provided for this purpose, revenue being guaranteed to the Southend Water Company by the Council. Also private properties, but mostly shops on water meter were licensed to supply water at a fee.

In the 3/4 years prior to outbreak of War the general picture was changing, far more people were recognising Canvey as a desirable residential area, housing estates were being built rather than individual bungalows on large land plots, such as Maisonwyck Estate (Mr. Fisk), Southwick Estate and Labworth Estate (Fielder Estates), which led to the estate developments of the present day.

Post War Period 1946-1974:

The effect of the neglect of war was evident everywhere and, of course, no progress had been possible in any of the essential services. 1946/1974 was a period of rehabilitation for everyone, particularly the Council and its Officers rejoining and those new to the scene.

Water mains had to be extended and arrangements made for house connections for some 2,500 properties. Only a handful of properties now remain without a piped water supply; these are on Sixty Acres and served by the remaining standpipe on Somnes Avenue. All development since this time has, of course, been initially provided with water supply and energy services of electricity and/or gas.

Soil drainage facilities were lacking to some 3,000 properties in 1948; sewers were extended and in many cases laid in alternate roads owing to the 60' x 60' plot sizes and the consequently large number of roads. I was largely responsible for the drainage programme at this time and arrangements for combined systems which have proved overall efficient and economical. Since that time, with very few exceptions, all properties have been provided with soil and surface water drainage at time of construction.

Refuse collection was still limited to collection from communal bins, but the Council quickly got to grips with this problem and from the beginnings of a fortnightly collection from individual properties by an open lorry, tarpaulin covered to purpose-built side loading vehicles was a short if more expensive step. Initially, after the war, this service was under the supervision of the Engineer and Surveyor, but shortly transferred to the Public Health Department where it was built up to its present strength in modern compression vehicles, staff and administration. At this moment in time, weekly collection from the 'back-door' has been achieved in most areas and the scheme will be completed very shortly.

Disposal since 1957 has been to the Newlands Controlled Disposal site, which will be utilised by Castle Point District Council for some time to come on Agency Agreement with the new Essex County Council.

Dealing with 1953 and the East Coast Floods, I was one of the many on Canvey who aroused from slumber that fateful Sunday morning, 1st February, found seawater surrounding his home.

After that initial early morning out on the rescue operation and a little later consultation with Mr. D.J. Legg (retired Chief Public Health Inspector), I was involved immediately in the very essential, but unspectacular tasks of ensuring adequate and safe public water supply in collaboration with the water undertaking; sampling and bacteriological testing of the flood water (up to waist in ice-cold water at times - in thigh boots, of course), the flood water naturally being sewage contaminated.

On clearance of materials which would have given rise to health risks, i.e., collection and removal of tons of foodstuffs; refuse, dead goats, domestic pets and cattle. In the last respect supervising the 'cutting up' (jointing) of dead cattle carcasses in the Winter Garden - Sixty Acre - Tewkes Creek Area to get them away by Army dukw or lorries where possible. The first advisory health pamphlet was issued under the signature of the late Dr. N.S.R. Lorraine, Medical Officer of Health, who himself fell sick a day or two after the initial shock of the catastrophe.

We then set up and staffed an Information Service Centre at William Read School until all the returning residents had sufficient information to return safely to their homes.

The control of operation of R.A.F. aircraft-engine preheaters to dry-out affected homes on degree of priority basis came under my jurisdiction and subsequent treatment of interior of properties with Shirlan N.A. to salt water affected walls/ceilings, as the first expedient. The bringing back to use of the drainage systems of premises was of major importance after the sewers and pumping system was again working, under the control of Mr. R.H. Stevens, Engineer and Surveyor.

Some years ago street cleansing and litter bin service was transferred to the Department. I am grateful to a progressive forward-looking Authority in re-equipping this service with modern electric manually-operated cleansing vehicles and motorised mini-sweeper, necessary for the miles of new streets laid in the last few years of the Council's life. I do not feel this system can be faulted. The efficiency of all vehicles is enhanced by the fact that they are housed in a modern garage on the Council's own premises, provided with a large concrete yard and fuel storage; this again is an achievement of which the Council can be proud through the dedication of its members serving the Public Health Committee over recent years.

I have mentioned the pre-war housing position; with the standstill of maintenance during the war years a number had fallen into such a state of disrepair as not to be repairable at reasonable cost. Between 1948 and early 1965 (17 years), some 200 properties were dealt with. Most of these were demolished and new properties erected in due time. From 1965, intensive work has been carried out in the field of demolition of the older and sub-standard timber-framed properties and at December 1973, no less than 1098 such demolitions were completed, and of this number 990 in the last 6 years.

From these properties 473 persons were rehoused by the Council, the remainder, mainly Owner/Occupiers, were rehoused in the private sector. The following table shows the year by year distribution.

	DEMOLITIONS:	CLOSURES:	RENDERED FIT:	L.A. REHOUSING OF OCCUPANT
1965	13	3	16	25
1966	31	4	14	39
1967	64	5	8	136
1968	96	8	20	85
1969	95	2	6	51
1970	138	2	13	47
1971	157	1	1	21
1972	253	4	28	41
1973	251	2	19	28
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TOTALS:	1098	31	125	473
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At the time of drafting these figures near end of February, i.e., days short of two months, 23 properties have been demolished this year, but this is no guide as to the total figure for 1974.

In the field of Clean Food and the enforcement of the Food Hygiene Regulations, the day-to-day inspection work required cannot be overstressed, particularly in the modern era of bulk supply and distribution; temperature control; frozen foods; stock rotation. There are heavy responsibilities on quality control from the raw materials suppliers, the manufacturers, the distributors and the retail outlet, to the consumer. The Public Health Officer is involved from start to finish where any doubt arises as to the fitness for human consumption. This includes the human element in food handling and serving the customer.

Enforcement of the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act is an essential function involving the suitability of the premises, lighting, heating, safety of equipment and machinery, and comfort and welfare of staff.

In short, the Council through its Public Health Committee is responsible for the promotion and protection of the public health, including the public water supply, housing fitness, clean air, factories (industrial premises), noise abatement, food for human consumption, including milk, houseboats, offices and shops, including Shops Act procedures, Public Cleansing, Rodent and Pest Control, Caravan and Camp Sites, Riding Establishments, Young Persons Employment.

Apart from this very wide field of Environmental Health duties, the responsibilities of the Council exercised through the Public Health Committee under the Petroleum and Methane Storage legislation is a particularly heavy one and I thank members for their help and support as the Officer designated to carry out these duties. The expansion of the installations on Canvey over recent years, updating and replacement by more sophisticated equipment and techniques to cope with national demands for products or methods of storage has created the necessity of far more time to be devoted in this field than hitherto.

In particular, the new technique of inground storage of liquid methane - firstly tried in America, but under very different circumstances and ground conditions - gave me very valuable experience in the cryogenic engineering field, but a very trying and sometimes worrying time during 1968/69 during the construction period, in spite of the experts on site! This was the first project of its kind in this country. At this point, I gratefully record my appreciation and thanks to Dr. H. Black, Chief Inspector of Explosives (now retired), and Dr. G.J. Jeacocke, Explosives Branch, Home Office, for their invaluable help and guidance during this period. Particularly to Dr. Jeacocke at that time and since on points arising on the construction and operation of other sophisticated plant systems including Boil-off Reliquifier and the 200 ton/day Liquefaction Plant built to handle North Sea Gas for Peak Load Storage should Algerian gas supplies at any time fail. This was completed something over a year ago.

This responsibility of inspection for licensing purposes and the issue of licences under the Petroleum legislation will pass to County Councils at 1st April, 1974 and the Officers involved in the Public Protection Department and Fire Service of the Essex County Council have been in consultation with me for some time and have the relevant information, and have visited sites with me."

Medical Re-housing

The following is a summary of housing applications which were referred to me during the year for assessment:-

Group 'A'	=	21	(7 points)
Group 'B'	=	28	(4 points)
Group 'C'	=	13	(2 points)
Group 'D'	=	5	(nil points)

A further 9 cases were dealt with, three of which involved transfers from existing Council dwellings.

Infectious Disease

The following infectious diseases were notified during 1973:-

Acute Encephalitis	4
Acute Meningitis	10
Dysentery	1
Food Poisoning	19
Infective Jaundice	1
Measles	420
Scarlet Fever	17
Tuberculosis	3
Whooping Cough	4

BENFLEET URBAN DISTRICT

Water supply

The domestic water supply has remained satisfactory in quality and quantity throughout the year. Some incidence of larval infestation of the water occurred and the Essex Water Company are actively pursuing remedial measures.

Drainage and sewerage

Improvement works to the foul and surface water sewerage system were continued. A considerable reduction in overflowing from the sewers has resulted from the extensive works carried out during the past few years, although during heavy rain some overflowing still occurs.

Refuse collections and disposal

The service functioned reasonably satisfactorily during the year. Some irregularities in collections occurred. These arose from the difficulty in recruiting adequate staff, and from the late delivery of a replacement vehicle.

Public Health Inspectors

Scheduled visits to food premises, factories, shops and offices continued as in the past. 13 houses were made fit and 4 were demolished. 47 grants for improvements were made. 71 samples of food were taken for analysis. Legal proceedings in relation to unsatisfactory food were taken on 5 occasions. A total of 4,730 visits were made by public health inspectors during the year.

Meat inspection

20,753 food animals were slaughtered at Cross Farm Abattoir, and all were inspected. No undue incidence of disease was found. No tuberculosis was discovered in cattle - a striking contrast to the usual incidence of about 30% encountered prior to the introduction of the tuberculosis eradication schemes.

Medical re-housing

The following is a summary of housing applications which were referred to me during the year for assessment:-

Group 'A'	=	16	(9 points)
Group 'B'	=	8	(6 points)
Group 'C'	=	6	(3 points)
Group 'D'	=	1	(nil points)

In addition a number of cases dealt with in previous years came up again for re-assessment.

Infectious Disease

The following infectious diseases were notified during 1973:-

Acute Meningitis	8
Food Poisoning	5
Infective Jaundice	7
Measles	58
Scarlet Fever	6
Tuberculosis	6
Whooping Cough	1

RAYLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT

Public health inspections

The Public Health Inspectors carried out 2,302 visits during the year and these were mainly relating to refuse collection and disposal, food hygiene and food premises, drainage and sewerage problems, atmospheric pollution, housing matters including improvement grants, noise abatement, pest control, infectious diseases and water supply, Offices and Shops Act and petroleum storage.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act

On the 31st December, the number of premises registered under this Act was as follows. The number of persons employed in these various premises are shown in brackets:-

Offices	...	...	...	...	58	(372)
Retail shops	...	...	...	...	129	(741)
Wholesale shops and warehouses	...				9	(40)
Catering establishments open to the public	...	...	...		15	(132)

Food Hygiene

There are 121 food establishments in the district and legal proceedings were taken in one instance under the Food Hygiene Regulations. 5,703 lbs. of unfit food were surrendered and disposed of. 9 premises are registered for the sale of preserved foods and 20 for the sale of ice cream.

Housing

Since 1956, 57 premises have been demolished as a result of action under the Housing Acts. During the year 19 premises were brought up to standard with the aid of improvement grants and since 1958 a total of 240 premises have been so improved. 8 premises were made fit as a result of enforcement action under the Housing Acts.

The following is a summary of housing applications that were referred for medical assessment during the year:-

Group 'A'	=	5	(50 points)
Group 'B'	=	11	(25 points)
Group 'C'	=	1	(10 points)
Group 'D'	=	2	(nil points)

In one instance a transfer was supported on medical grounds and a number of cases from previous years came up for re-consideration and revision of medical assessment.

Refuse collection and salvage

Rayleigh is served in the main with a weekly collection of house and trade refuse. Paper and cardboard is collected from certain premises and salvaged, being sold for pulping at a paper mill. For these purposes 5 refuse freighters and 18 men are employed. The refuse is deposited on the Southend Corporation tip at Leigh and amounted to 6282 tons. The amount of paper salvaged amounted to 113.43 tonnes and realised £1289.24 on sale.

Noise

The reading of ambient noise levels continued at selected sites in the area. These give an indication of background noise which may be used as a yardstick in the future. Visits were carried out following complaints of excessive noise and remedial action taken whenever possible.

Atmospheric pollution

The monitoring station is part of the National Survey and daily reading of air pollution continues to be taken. These indicate the amount of smoke and sulphur dioxide in the air. 186 visits were carried out regarding all aspects of air pollution and enforcement action taken in the appropriate cases.

The Factories Act 1961

106 premises are registered and 105 use mechanical power. 27 inspections were made but no defects found or reported. There were 18 outworkers in the December list and the nature of the work undertaken was wearing apparel.

Infectious disease

The following infectious diseases were notified during 1973:-

Acute Meningitis	4
Food Poisoning	1
Infective Jaundice	3
Measles	114
Scarlet Fever	4
Tuberculosis	1
Whooping Cough	1

ROCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT

Imported Food Regulations
Southend Airport

During 1973 78,719 kilos of meat products mainly pate were inspected. In July samples were taken from a consignment of Liver Pate for chemical analysis and the consignment was detained at the Airport. The Public Analyst reported the samples contained sorbic acid which is prohibited in meat products under the preservative in Food Regulations 1962. This was taken up with the manufacturers in Belgium. The consignment was seized and dealt with by Justice of the Peace for an order for its destruction. Consignments are now accompanied by declaration from the manufacturer stating that their products do not contain any sorbic acid. By arrangement no food stuffs are released by H.M. Custom Officers until a certificate has been issued by a Public Health Inspector authorising removal.

Foods and Drugs Act 1955

Four successful prosecutions were taken under Section 2 of this Act and fines totalling £45 with £35 costs were made. Offences related to shelled cashew nuts, mouldy meat and fruit pies, and bread.

Port health

During 1973 102 ships docked at Baltic Wharf, Wallasea Island involving shipping tonnage of 40,319 tons. The nationality of the ships arriving was mainly German, Dutch, Polish, Danish, Finnish and Norwegian. In all but a few instances the imports consisted of timber and timber products.

Medical re-housing

The following is a summary of housing applications which were referred to me during the year for assessment:-

Group 'A'	=	14	(50 points)
Group 'B'	=	15	(25 points)
Group 'C'	=	3	(10 points)
Group 'D'	=	6	(nil points)

Four cases from previous years were reconsidered and two were regraded.

Infectious disease

The following infectious diseases were notified during 1973:-

Acute Encephalitis	1	Measles	494
Acute Meningitis	4	Scarlet Fever	42
Dysentery	1	Tuberculosis	8
Food Poisoning	23	Whooping Cough	11
Infective Jaundice	10		

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

D. A. S. H.

Medical Officer of Health.

28th March, 1974.

